

Entertainment

Entertain Yourself

Portland indie/pop band blooms this spring

KELSEY SCHRADER

Page Editor

At first look, The Shins, a growing-in-popularity Portland-based band, may look innocent with their flannel shirts and their quiet persona. But don't let it fool you, according to an interview by Blender magazine, our favorite indie/pop band members battle with insecurity, mayhem, and super models just like any other rock group.

The Shins are one of Portland's more famous rock bands. The band includes band members James Mercer, Martin Crandall, Dave Hernandez, Jesse Sandoval and Eric Johnson. The Shins are all 30-year-old, slightly balding, sweater-vest-wearing guys from Albuquerque, N.M. (they later relocated to Portland, Ore.). Their name was based on a fictional family in the Broadway show, "The Music Man," which was a favorite of Mercer's father.

The Shins released two singles, "Nature Bears a Vacuum" in 1999 and "When I Goostep" in 2000. While on tour with Modest Mouse, they were met in San Francisco by a Sub Pop representative who offered to release their debut album,



Photo courtesy of internet

"Oh, Inverted World." From there, The Shins went from a side project to selling out the Crystal Ballroom in 20 minutes. You could say The Shins have done some growing.

Three years ago, the notion of this modest retro-pop outfit performing for a sold-out arena with screaming fans of all ages would have been hard to fathom. Yet ever since "New Slang," appeared in the hit romantic comedy (and my favorite movie) "Garden State," the Shins have gained popularity.

Like Death Cab for Cutie

or the Arcade Fire, the Shins are what some are calling "yindie" rock: "half yuppie, half indie — palatable enough for the masses, edgy enough for the snobs" according to urbandictionary.com.

If you haven't listened to the Shins already, they sound like a mix between the Cure and Simon and Garfunkel. Even with their soaring vocals and their pop hooks, this band is far from the pop genre. If you're not yet accustomed to their different sound, you might want to

listen to the songs "We Will Become Silhouettes" and "Kissing the Lippless."

You'd think after all this publicity and touring, the Shins might feel a little pride in their work, but actually they are quite humble and maybe a little insecure. "People think I'm a better person than I am," Mercer said in Blender, "just because of these pretty songs."

Martin Crandall, who could win a Chris Parnell look-alike competition hands down, has quite the history with America's Next Top Model's first-runner-up Elyse Sewell. In fact, they've been dating for the past seven years. "People think, he's in a rock band, she's a model, it must be like E! True Hollywood Story!" Crandall said in Blender. "But here's all you need to know: I bagged

her when she was 17." Well stated, Chris.

Although the Shins unfortunately couldn't fit me into their tight interview schedule (but, mind you, I did try!), their publicist provided many answers to questions such as, "Why Oregon?" The Shins moved from Arizona to Oregon because after they were signed, the Shins felt like they had the freedom to move somewhere new. Going on tour exposed the band members to different parts of the country, and they were really drawn to Portland where they moved in 2001.

No doubt, the Shins have become one of the most in-demand bands in America. Their music has been used in Gap commercials and McDonald commercials, but the Shins prefer other venues. Whether it's a commercial, a sound track in a major motion picture, just another ground breaking album, the Shins will go down in history for their music, their quirky looks, and, I think, being one of the best bands of all time.

Disney names first African American princess; better late than never

MARGARET ADAMS

Page Editor

It's startling to think that Disney got away with not having an African American princess until now. Arriving better late than never is Maddy, a 19-year-old black housemaid living in New Orleans in the 1920s, in the new film, "The Frog Princess," to be released in 2009.

Before the fact that she's a maid gets you riled up, keep in mind that nearly every Disney princess has been oppressed. For instance, Mulan can't fight because she's a woman. So, no, it's not necessarily racially discourteous or irresponsible. Maddy could just as easily be white.

The story presumably follows the classic Grimm brothers fairy tale, "The Frog Prince" though the movie will be a musical adaptation. In the original story, a king sets out his three sons to find

brides. One way or another, the youngest prince ends up with a frog. The king puts each of the brides-to-be through various tasks; baking bread, doing laundry and any other household chore that would undoubtedly be expected of a wife.

The two human brides are lazy and fail at each of their tasks while the frog miraculously excels in all of her chores. Even so, the youngest prince is ashamed of his frog bride until she magically transforms into a beautiful princess. These types of things happen in New Orleans even today, so it shouldn't be a difficult adaptation.

Jennifer Hudson and fellow "Dreamgirl," Anika Noni Rose are reportedly top contenders for the lead, though Alicia Keys has apparently contacted Disney's studio chief to express her interest and beg for the role.



Graphic courtesy of internet
"The Frog Princess" will be a 2-D animated production, either primarily hand-drawn or created using computer-generated imagery. While 2004's "Home on the Range" was set to be Disney's last 2-D animation film, the new leaders of Disney's animation department would like to see more movies done in the classic form of animation.

Adams reveals bottom

MARGARET ADAMS

Page Editor



So they gave me this column where I get to rip on stuff people are into. You can't

get insulted though, that's part of the rules. Plus, if you really do like what I hate then you shouldn't let me tell you it sucks and it won't get you down. Keep up that attitude.

1. PT Cruisers are all over the place for some reason, but I'm still always surprised when I see one on the road. It's difficult to pity the person driving though. It's not like their economic situation forced them to resort to a Cruiser; they aren't even cheap. It's twenty-five grand for a PT with a turbo and exclusive sport bucket seats. So people buy them because they're attracted to them? Attracted? To a PT Cruiser? Come on.

2. I just found out Sean Paul won a Best Reggae

Album Grammy in 2004 for a record called "Dutty Rock" that sold six million copies.

3. Everyone knows that we are trashing the planet and I swear a gum wrapper will fit in your pocket. Who decided it would be okay to use the ground as a garbage can? Litter at your house if you love to do it so much.

4. Tattoos are permanent and seem like the kind of thing you would take the time to think through. Enter celtic armband tattoos. Is that really the best you could do?

5. The Ice Cream Skate Team wears Ice Creams by Reebok x Pharrell on their feet. It's sort of like The Wiggles of skate teams judging by the shoes. One of Pharrell's clothing lines, Ice Cream, sells denim with running dogs on the crotch and \$80 t-shirts with money rolls on them. The running dog is their signature pattern, I guess, so you can also get an all over print bucket hat to go with your pants. That sounds really good. Billionaire Boys Club is super hyped too, and it's all about diamonds, money signs and bullets.